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ABSTRACT

This report on year-round education as it directly affects elementary school libraries focuses on two major aspects of impact: people (site level instructional media center clerks, district personnel, and delivery of library services to both students and staff) and things (the library collection, equipment, and the facility itself). General information on year-round education programs was obtained from the documents listed in the bibliography. Consultations and on-site interviews were conducted locally (Riverside, California) and in San Diego and Monterey Counties, with particular attention paid to schools on the 60-20 four track plan (i.e., 60 days of instructional time followed by 20 days of vacation for each track, with 75% of the students in school at any one time). Both district level and on-site staff were consulted, including district librarians/coordinators of instructional services, principals, school librarians, and library clerks. Interview topics included district level support staff, services and contracted work year, site-level library staff and contracted work year, scheduling of classes, circulation, library services to both students and faculty, library collections, equipment, and facilities. The principal findings of the study are summarized in the context of two major issues: providing equitable library services to both year-round and traditional schools, while at the same time keeping that service at the current level. Compilations of actions taken and procedures developed by various other districts are provided together with recommendations for local implementation. In conclusion, it is suggested that school librarians should work more closely with public libraries to formulate library-based activities that complement each other and serve to benefit both programs. The bibliography lists eight print sources, eight consultants, and 2 site visit locations. (BBM)

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November 26, 1990

IMPACT OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION ON RUSD ELEMENTARY LIBRARIES

With Recommendations for Implementation

Prepared by Christine M. Allen
District Librarian, K-12

INTRODUCTION:

At the end of June, 1990 I was directed by Dr. Kirk Lewis to initiate a study of the impact of year-round education on RUSD libraries. As outlined by Dr. Lewis, I have based my research and recommendations on the following assumptions:

a) With the exception of Mt. View, the seven largest elementary schools will be the first to implement a year-round calendar: Fremont, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Magnolia, Taft, and Washington.

b) This implementation will begin July 1, 1991.

c) The schools will operate on a "60-20" calendar (60 days of instructional time followed by 20 days of vacation for each track).

d) There will be four tracks, meaning that 75% of the student population will be in school at any given time. Using the preliminary CBEDS report of 10/17/90, this means that the seven schools will be functioning with the following populations (plus or minus) on three tracks at one time.

Fremont - 734; Harrison - 788; Jackson - 663; Jefferson - 804; Magnolia - 593; Taft - 702; Washington - 622.

e) All students and staff will be on vacation during the regular two-week Christmas break.

f) There is a possibility of another one-week vacation at the end of June, at least for all students.

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ORGANIZATION OF STUDY:

The emphasis of this report is on year-round education as it directly affects elementary libraries. A more extensive study would be necessary to adequately assess the increased impact on the secondary school library though some of the data and recommendations contained herein would be applicable.

The report focuses on the two major aspects of impact: people and things. "People" includes both site level IMC Clerks and District personnel as well as delivery of library services to both students and staff. "Things" are composed of the library collection, including equipment, and the facility itself.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY:

Year-round education programs come in a variety of forms and have been implemented for a variety of reasons. However, all have periods of instruction and vacation that alternate throughout the year and most are initiated to provide additional classroom space. RUSD is in need of additional space to house a growing student population. For financial reasons, it is not possible to build the number of new schools that would be required.

Compared to other multi-track plans, the 60-20, four track calendar has particular advantages and disadvantages that directly relate to the management of a school library.

1. Provides longer periods of both teaching and vacation than the 45-15 plans.
2. Has fewer beginnings and endings of tracks than 45-15.
3. Requires more start-ups and endings for each track than some other year-round calendars.
4. May require a considerable amount of sharing of storage space for teacher and pupil materials. (7)

DESIGN OF STUDY:

The findings in this report are based on data from a variety of sources. General information about year-round education programs was obtained from the documents listed in the bibliography. Because of a rather disconcerting lack of specific information regarding classified staff in general and library staff in particular, it was not possible to compile broad-based statistics. In fact, it should be noted that impact on or arrangement for school libraries were not mentioned in any way in any of the documents I was able to procure.

Consultations and on-site interviews were conducted locally as well as in San Diego and Monterey Counties. Particular attention was paid to those schools on the 60-20, four track plan. District level personnel as well as on-site staff were consulted. These included District Librarians/Coordinators of Instructional Services, principals, school librarians, and library clerks. Interview topics included: District level support staff, services and contracted work year, site level library staff and contracted work year, scheduling of classes, circulation, library services to both students and faculty, library collections, equipment and facilities.

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLE FINDINGS:

The two major issues that must be addressed are providing equitable library services to both year-round and traditional schools while at the same time keeping that service at the current level. This involves both district and site level services affecting people and things. As there were no national or state documents to consult, this report represents an original compilation of actions taken and procedures developed by various other districts as well as recommendations for local implementation.

District Level:

Adapting existing procedures and personnel to provide continuous services at the District level is less complex and generally more easily accomplished than at the site level. Other districts were already on or changed to 12-month calendars by extending contracted work years for support staff and instituting continous year-round circulation of media.

RUSD would need to extend the work years of two IMS supervisors and two IMS processing clerks in order to provide ordering, processing and media circulation on an equal year-round basis. All three District Librarians would need to be 11-month employees and would have to take the year-round calendar into consideration when planning any school staff activities.

Site Level:

With regard to staffing, no overall solution was found that could be easily and economically implemented. Other districts have instituted a variety of staffing plans, generally based on their current level of service. These ranged from contractual re-negotiations for 12-month work years to closing the library for equal amounts of time each track due to lack of staffing. However, several applicable solutions were found for providing services by track to both students and staff. In the area of collection, equipment, and facility maintenance, all districts noted that continuous use caused increased need for repair and maintenance with attendent increases in allocated "start-up" and continuing budgets.

In order to provide equal and comparable service, RUSD would need to extend the work days and years of all seven affected IMC Clerk positions to 8 hours and 12 months respectively. Other options, in descending order of service levels, are provided. The District Librarian would need to instruct IMC Clerks in optimum methods for scheduling classes and maintaining necessary circulation records. Providing an automated circulation system for four of the seven schools as part of the "start-up" cost is the preferred solution to complicated circulation and record-keeping methods. The increased repair and maintenance needed for equipment and facilities would need to be provided by the district on a continuing basis equal to that currently provided.

IMPACT ON PEOPLE

PEOPLE-District level personnel-Staffing:

Schools will be in session during the District Librarian's current off-duty month. Training of any new clerks coming on duty in the summer would not be possible. Scheduled workshops/inservices for IMC Clerks would need adjustment or repetition. Communication with off-duty clerks would present a challenge. Since the other two District Librarians are also currently off-duty in the summer, there would be no consultation and/or assistance to the year-round schools from any Librarian during that four-week period.

IMS staff are not all 12-month employees. The summer has been the period in which vacations are taken. Both the processing supervisor and the media circulation supervisor are off-duty for one month.

PEOPLE-District level-Services:

Modifications of purchasing schedules would require a subsequent modification of IMS ordering deadlines. If such changes caused each track to have its own ordering and purchasing schedule, off-duty times could become a problem.

The current centralized ordering and processing schedule would need to be spread throughout the year to equally accommodate the year-round schools.

PEOPLE-Site level personnel-Staffing:

IMC Clerks are currently employed for a 10-month work year. This leaves 2 months during which the library will still need qualified staff to provide service.

IMC Clerks are currently working a six-hour day. Though there will be a smaller number of students at any one time to which service would be provided, school populations will remain relatively large. Scheduling of class visits will not be appreciably easier nor will clerical time be noticably greater.

PEOPLE-Site level procedures:

Monthly and yearly circulation reports should not be affected.

The yearly inventory would still have to be completed by August due to District deadlines for reporting these statistics to the State. This necessitates closing the library for 1 to 2 weeks.

Scheduling of classes would be more complicated in that four tracks are involved. The days on which tracks change will need special arrangements.

Circulation procedures would have to be adapted to the changing nature of a track system.

The Young Reader Medal reading program would need re-organizing to accommodate all students.

IMPACT ON THINGS

THINGS-District level:

Media will need to circulate year-round.
Media inventory, purchasing, processing, etc. schedules may need to be adjusted.

THINGS-Site level:

Over a period of time there will be more "wear and tear" on equipment, collection materials, and the library facility itself. This would necessitate increased funds for replacement and repair.

Note: Due to the difficulty of planning for the "unknown", "the full impact of operating the program will not become a reality until one becomes fully involved." (6)

FINDINGS

The overall goal of all year-round districts was to provide equitable library services to both year-round and traditional school sites.

PEOPLE-District level personnel-Staffing:

Contracted work years for District Librarians generally did not change. Many already worked a 12-month year so no alteration of vacation schedules was necessary. Some that worked 11 months chose to continue with the four week off-duty period in the summer when not all schools in the district were year-round. Others chose to take one week of off-duty time during each track. The particular schedule chosen was either left up to the employee or decided by consensus between the individual and supervisor.

No one reported having had a new IMC clerk come on during an off-duty time. Inservices, workshops/training were scheduled and/or repeated as needed to cover all staff equally. Communication with off-duty staff was by mail to the home.

PEOPLE-District level Services:

Of the districts who provided centralized ordering and processing to their schools, all processing and supervisory staff was already on a 12-month work year or the jobs were re-negotiated to become 12 months, even if not all schools were on year-round scheduling.

Centralized ordering of library materials was done as before or was changed to a continual process if the business cycles allowed.

Those districts that did not have centralized ordering and processing either proceeded as usual or changed to a continual process at each school site.

Districts with year-round calendars that did not overlap the fiscal year did not have to keep dual sets of records but still needed to adjust warehouse orders for school sites.

PEOPLE-Site level personnel-Staffing:

No pattern emerged as an overall answer to classified staffing. In addition, since the majority of year-round schedules were in place due to over-crowding, the reduced pupil load was only noticed for a short time. Population continued to grow, causing increased scheduling problems.

No district reported that the work day had been lengthened for IMC Clerks. Some districts already had clerks working an eight-hour day, while some were working as few as four hours. The one district that had Certificated Elementary Librarians allowed for half-time clerks only.

Two important difference should be noted. Some school libraries were already closed for part of each day or part of each week due to the clerk's work schedule. Thus, closure of the library for year-round adaptation was not really noticed as a problem. The other difference was that most school populations were not as high as our targeted schools. The average total student population was 600, with the projected limit being 750. This contrasts with Magnolia, our smallest, at 791 and Jefferson, our largest, at 1072.

The following is a list of the various responses to the classified staff work year:

1. IMC Clerks remained on their same work year schedule. During the summer months, either the same person continued to work on an extended year basis or an off-duty, regularly employed clerk substituted. This was an option, decided individually, with the district accommodating requests when possible. The substituting clerk was responsible for day to day maintenance and monthly record-keeping, but did not alter already existing schedules or programs.

2. IMC Clerks still worked a 10-month year, but the two months of off-duty time was spread out among all four tracks. The library was closed when the clerk was off-duty. In some schools, the period of time during which the library was closed alternated with computer lab time. In other schools, the library was just closed. Teachers planned related classroom instruction around the open library times.

3. IMC Clerks still worked a total of 10 months, but on a four-day week schedule. The library was closed on the fifth day each week. Clerks generally did not like this schedule for three reasons: no extended vacation period, the library was frequently used even when closed, and scheduling classes was extremely difficult. After the day off, clerks had additional "catch-up" and "clean-up" tasks to perform. This, combined with the number of weekly class visits that had to be scheduled into a four-day week meant that daily maintenance tasks suffered to an even greater extent. It also meant that no provision for any library usage other than check-out and return was possible.

4. All affected IMC Clerk positions were re-classified to 12-month positions, as one overall contract negotiation. Transfers were allowed. There was some "burn-out" reported, in particular due to the heavy schedule of weekly classes.

5. All affected IMC Clerks positions were re-classified to 12-month positions as the job opened. This method was also used in conjunction with transfers; those clerks who wished to work a 12-month year were transferred to the year-round sites.

6. In districts with Elementary Librarians and clerks on site, coverage was provided by alternating vacation periods. Thus, part of the year two people were on duty and part of the year only one person was on duty. Lessons were scheduled only when the certificated Librarian was on duty.

7. The district employed "floaters" as substitutes. These were people trained to perform the regular duties of clerks, but who worked on a rotating schedule at various schools. These people were not substitutes in the usual sense, as this could be a full-time, 12-month position depending upon the number of schools. All districts using this method reported that it was extremely difficult to keep these positions filled.

PEOPLE-Site level personnel-Services to students and staff:

Scheduling of class visits:
It was generally judged to be inefficient or just not feasible to re-schedule each time a track came on. Thus various methods were developed to organize a year-long schedule:

a) Each track had a scheduled library day; track 1-Tues., track 2-Wed., etc. When a track was off, this became an open day for other activities. This only works for populations of 600 or less.

b) Library visits were scheduled by classroom rather than teacher.

c) It was necessary to repeat specific booktalks, storytimes, and/or reading incentive programs as needed for each track. Seasonal and holiday activities were not changed. Reading incentive programs were shortened to fit the on-track time period.

Services to students:

This was seen as a priority area so no noticeable changes were made.

Services to staff:

When "track change day" arrived, no classes were scheduled. This allowed the clerk to assist incoming and outgoing teachers with equipment and materials.

THINGS-District level:

Media circulation was provided on a 12-month basis.

Automated circulation systems were in use at some districts with others planning to implement a system soon. This eased both record keeping and inventory problems.

Inventory was taken yearly during Christmas break or was conducted on a continual basis.

Collection maintenance and repair continued as previously scheduled.

THINGS-Site level-Library collection-Circulation:

There are currently two methods of circulating library materials; using an automated system and using the traditional "pocket and card" system.

Whenever possible, library circulation was computerized.

When traditional card check-out was used, the following procedures were developed for arrangement of charge cards:

a) by color code to match the track color code.
b) by track number and classroom number when classrooms remained the same.
c) by assignment of a specific "library" number when classrooms changed.
d) by teacher name and track number.

All reported that watching the calendar became more important.

Some traditional circulation users reported that overdues were more of a problem with students.

No one reported excessive losses of materials as long as check-outs for each track were kept separated and up-to-date.

Students were generally not allowed to check-out during their last week on track.

Only one school, on a one-track year-round schedule, allowed check-out of materials to students over the off-track break period. A special contract form was signed by parents before books were released to students. No undue loss of materials was incurred.

It was usually more of a problem to collect materials checked-out to individual teachers. Frequently these ended up in the teacher's own storage compartments or extra time was needed to follow-up on reminders.

THINGS-Site level-Maintenance of Collection:

When an on-line Card Catalog was also in use, clerical filing time was much reduced.

Even automated libraries were still closed for a designated inventory week each year as well as scheduled weekly periods for general collection maintenance.

Because the traditional method of inventory is more time-consuming, libraries were closed for two weeks. Scheduled times were also allowed each week for clerical maintenance work.

Some libraries were conducting "on-going" inventories, that is, closing sections of the collection for inventory while keeping the library open. This can only be accomplished if there is uninterrupted clerical time available. It is also difficult to complete the entire collection within one year.

All reported that materials wore out faster and needed more on-going repair. This added to the time needed for collection maintenance duties as well as increased needed supply funds.

All reported that multiple copies of particular titles were more of a necessity.

THINGS-Site level-Equipment-Maintenance and Circulation:

Most equipment was checked-out to classrooms with specific items kept in a central area for daily scheduled use. When possible, all equipment was checked-out to classrooms on a permanent basis.

Equipment tended to need more minor repair over a period of time. More lamps were used which increased supply costs.

Yearly maintenance was performed on all equipment at each site by District technicians.

THINGS-Site level-Facility-Maintenance and Storage:

Daily maintenance was not affected. Large maintenance projects (painting, cleaning of carpets, etc.) were done at Christmas break, at a special "maintenance" break in June, or in late afternoon/evenings after students and staff were gone.

All reported that prolonged use with no "down time" caused more wear and tear on furniture and carpets.

Library storage space was not affected except when there was no other place to put the teachers' stored materials. Each teacher was given a finite amount of space.Teachers off-track were assigned storage carts and the overflow sometimes had to be "parked" in the library facility. Staff rooms and other areas were usually used to store these classroom materials.

In a few cases, library or cafeteria space was converted for storage of rolling carts and/or cabinetry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Two overriding assumptions are made regarding RUSD elementary libraries. One is the same as was found at all districts, that of providing equitable library services to both year-round and traditional schools. The other is that as long as both year-round and traditional schools exist, the same level of service now in effect must be kept.

According to the research, there are three main areas that, when successfully implemented, produce optimum year-round education programs. These are community support, work assignment options, and communication. It was also noted that "year-round schools require many things - the greatest of which is sharing."(6)

In addition, it was constantly observed that the level of organization needed increased due to the adaptations necessary to implement a year-round school. Organization is desirable in any educational setting of course but with year-round schedules, prior planning and close monitoring become necessities. Time management and organizational skills applied beforehand to procedures and systems will ultimately determine the quality of the library service.

The following recommendations are made taking all of the above into consideration as well as using the information gathered, formulating some other solutions, and fitting all these to the unique situations in this district.

PEOPLE-District level personnel-Staffing:

The contracted work year for the District Librarian, K-12 should remain at 11 months. Off-duty time, at least for the first year of implementation, should be taken from the middle of July to the middle of August, 1991.

The District Librarian, in scheduling inservice/workshops during the traditional school year, should include those IMC Clerks that will not be working a traditional calendar. If necessary, notice of these meetings and/or other important information should be sent to the home address. For the first year of implementation, additional meetings with the seven principals and IMC Clerks involved will need to be scheduled.

Both the IMS Processing and Media Circulation supervisors are now working 11-month years. Either both jobs should be changed to contracted 12-month positions or arrangements made to extend their work years by one month.

Currently, two IMS clerks work 12 month years. Two other processing clerk positions should be changed to a contracted 12-month position or arrangements made to extend the work year for both positions by one month.

PEOPLE-District level-Services:

Until decisions are made regarding business services, the only recommendation that can be made regarding ordering and processing of school materials is that IMS adapt existing timelines as needed to any new schedules.

PEOPLE-Site level personnel-Staffing:

(in order of desirability, these are the staffing arrangements that will provide optimum library service)

1. All affected IMC Clerk positions should be reclassified and negotiated to 12-month, 8-hour day positions. Contract wording should differentiate between year-round and traditional sites. This plan offers on-going, equal and consistent service to both students and staff. Using this along with the option for transferring to or from a year-round school should result in all year-round schools being staffed only by IMC Clerks who choose to work a 12-month year. This plan also continues to work even when all sites are year-round.

2. All affected IMC Clerk positions should be reclassified and negotiated to 12-month, 8-hour day positions but only as the job becomes open. Even using this along with transfer options probably means that only some of the seven affected jobs could be reclassified immediately. To cover the others, an extended contract could be offered as in #5 below.

3. Same as #1, with clerks working the existing 6-hour day.

4. Same as #2, with clerks working the existing 6-hour day.

5. All IMC Clerks remain on the existing 10-month work year, with the affected clerks being offered an extended contract to total 8 hours a day and 12 months. In the event that the on-site clerk does not wish to work the extended day and/or year, other IMC Clerks in the district are offered the option of an extended year at that year-round site. If it is the extended day that is the problem, other instructional aides at the site could be offered the extra two hours.
If and when all elementary schools are on a year-round schedule, there will be no pool of clerks from which substitutes can be chosen. At that time, contract negotiated reclassification of the job should again be considered.

6. Same as #5, with clerks working the existing 6-hour day.

It is also recommended that as soon as is possible, library staffing be extended using the 1989-90 schedule as a guide. This schedule added hours as the student population increased, using 6 hours as the base.

PEOPLE-Site level personnel-Services to students and staff:

Services to students should remain a high priority. All students must be offered access to library materials as well as to some degree of assistance as needed.

Scheduling of class visits should be by classroom. For example, whatever class is currently in classroom #12 would go to the library on a particular day at a specified time. This accommodates the situation of teachers and students being assigned to a different classroom when they come back on track.

On track change days, the library should have no scheduled classes. The library clerk should be free to assist both incoming and outgoing teachers and students.

THINGS-District level:

Media circulation should be provided on a 12-month basis.

Until more schools are on a year-round schedule, current media circulation clerical staffing is adequate. If and when all schools are year-round, all clerical staff should be 12-month employees.

A long-range plan should be undertaken whereby an automated system for circulation of media is installed before half or more of the elementary schools are year-round.

Inventory scheduling and procedures should be at the discretion of the Media Circulation supervisor who should adjust them to allow for uninterrupted year-round service.

THINGS-Site level-Library collection-Circulation:

Plans to fund the installation of an automated circulation system should be formulated for the four schools that do not currently have it. Automated circulation advantages include:
a) a specific calendar of due dates can be input for each track
b) overdue items are immediately known
c) teachers, studentsand items are all assigned barcode numbers which are in an easily accessed data base
d) circulation records are automatically kept and reports printed when needed
e) the check-out and return process is much faster.

While the traditional system is still in use, a method of noting track numbers and assigning a unique "library number" to both students and faculty should be used.

Calendar dates for each track must be noted and used for circulation periods. No student check-out of materials should be permitted during the last week before going off track.

Neither teachers nor students should check-out materials over their breaks. Exceptions could be made for teachers if the material is not in demand, or if there are sufficient copies.

THINGS-Site level-Maintenance of Collection:

If automated, the library should be closed for at least one week per year to allow for inventory. If not automated, at least two weeks will be necessary. Inventory should be scheduled so as to be completed by August and should be performed yearly at approximately the same time every year. Using the last two weeks in June for this purpose is recommended.

As time on a year-round schedule increases, additional funds will be needed to replace more and more materials. Other additional funds will be needed to meet the needs of an increasing student population.

THINGS-Site level-Equipment-Maintenance and Circulation:

If not already, equipment should be checked-out to classrooms for the year. Only those items that are constantly used by a large percentage of the staff should be kept in a central area and circulated as needed.

Preventative maintenance of all equipment, performed yearly on site would extend the life of the item. At a specified time, equipment could be gathered at a central location so that technicians could perform the maintenance in an assembly line manner.

THINGS-Site level-Facility-Maintenance and Storage:

Large maintenance projects should be performed on the library as per District schedules for other areas.

Other areas should be found for storage of off-track teachers' materials. Space is at as much of a premium in libraries as elsewhere. Using the library for that kind of storage would negatively impact its designated purpose.

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It should be noted that Children's Services Librarians at Public Libraries in all areas where year-round education exists are looking at the services they provide to school-age children. In particular, this involves the customary summer reading program. Several innovative plans are being considered in order to meet the needs of both on and off-track students and their families.

As RUSD becomes more involved in year-round education, working even more closely with the public library to formulate library-based activities that compliment each other will serve to benefit both programs.

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9. Consultations: a) Sharon Calahan, Curriculum and Ed Services, Hemet USD.
   b) Christina Doyle and Kathy Mason, District Librarians, Moreno Valley USD.
   c) Theo Schiller, District Librarian, Alvord USD.
   d) Nora Natke, Coordinator of Children's Services, Riverside City and County Public Library.
   e) Carol Rowley, Coordinator, Instructional Media Services, Cajon Valley Union School District.
   f) Anne Davis, Children's Services Librarian, Palm Springs Public Library.
   g) Marilyn N. Robertson, Coordinating Field Librarian, Los Angeles USD.
   h) Compilation of round-table discussion at State CMLEA conference. District Librarians from all over California discussed "What works for library services in year-round schools"

10. Site visits: a) Hyatt Elementary, San Jacinto USD, San Jacinto. Deborah DeForge, Principal; Gwen Witt, Library Clerk.
    b) Hayes & Marshall Elementaries, Monterey USD, Fort Ord. Ray Stevenson and Iva McDuffy, Principals; Jenny Stevens and Jan Snibbe, Librarians.